representatives of Ladakh Buddhist Association were not prepared to discuss any other issue other than the setting up of the Hill District Council. It was, however, impressed upon them to discuss developmental and administrative issues. But they insisted only on acceptance of Hill District Council status. The Governor, Jammu & Kashmir met the representatives at Srinagar and assured the representatives of Ladakh Buddhist Association of sympathetic support to their district cultural identity. As regard their other political demands, the representatives of Ladakh Buddhist Association have been assured that these issues wil be taken up after the situation in the Kashmir Valley is brought under control and political process in the State starts.

Indo-South Africa relations

1440. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of South Africa have taken major steps to end aparthied; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to review relations with that Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. The South African Government has, besides unbanning anti-apartheid organisations and releasing prominent political prisoners, repealed all apartheid legislation. However, further steps have to be taken before progress towards a non-racial and democratic South Africa can be certified as "irreversible".

(b) The Indian Government is monitoring the developments in South Africa very closely. For the moment, there is no change in our policy towards South Africa. A decision to review relations with South Africa will be taken after we are convinced that the process of dismantling apartheid has become irreversible.

Restricutring of North Eastern Council

1441. SHRI KHYOMO LOTHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to restructure the North-Eastern Council;

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to include Members of Parliament from the North-East States in the Council so that the Members of Parliament may also play their role effectively in the process of development of that region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) to (c) No decision has been taken to restructure the North Eastern Council.

Release of Funds to States under Central Road Fund

1442. SHRI NARESH C. PUGLIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount made available to the States from the Central Road Fund for road development during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) what is the annual share of Maharashtra fixed for release from the Central Road Fund and whether Maharashtra is getting its share since October, 1988 onwards; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) A statement is enclosed.